

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS HANOI 002411

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

STATE FOR EAP/MLS AND PRM, BANGKOK FOR REFUGEE COORDINATOR,
GENEVA FOR RMA

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PREF](#) [VM](#) [CB](#) [ETMIN](#) [HUMANR](#)

SUBJECT: UNHCR ACCOMPANIES REFUSENIK RETURNEES TO PLEIKU

Reftel: PHNOM PENH 1519 AND PREVIOUS

1. (SBU) On September 15, UNHCR Officer-in-Charge for Vietnam Vu Anh Son reported to Poloff that, as agreed to by the GVN, he accompanied the six 'refusenik' returnees from the Cambodian border to Pleiku on September 9. Son met the six at the border at 12:30 p.m. as planned and traveled with them and their Vietnamese escorts to Pleiku, arriving just before midnight. The returnees spent the night at the local Department of Trade building. (Note: Son commented that this was the normal accommodation for returnees' first night in Pleiku. End Note.) The following morning (September 10), the authorities from Duc Co and Chu Se Districts arrived and took the returnees home (three returnees in each district). Son said there were no problems at all with the return and that "everything was very good."

2. (SBU) Son further stated that he visited three of the returnees on September 12 and the remaining three on September 13 (this despite torrential rains). The returnees and their families appeared to be very happy and in good condition, and their overall mood was much better than that of previous returnees, Son observed. The "leader" of the refuseniks seemed to be working with all of their families to ensure their welfare and well-being. Furthermore, the six did not request UNHCR to conduct a monitoring visit at a later date. Finally, Son stated that his team visited various local authorities in and around Pleiku (NFI) who assured him of their commitment to treat the returnees just like any other citizens. One unnamed official reportedly said, "Although it was their mistake to leave, they should not be treated like criminals."

3. (SBU) Comment: We are pleased to hear that the return went as planned and that UNHCR was satisfied by the condition of the six returnees. However, we will continue to work with the GVN on continued monitoring of all returnees in the Central Highlands, including the six. Mission Vietnam hopes to schedule a return visit to the region in the near future and will attempt to meet with the 'refusenik' six at that time. End Comment.

MARINE